

STATE OF NEBRASKA ♦ SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
1445 "K" ST. • STATE CAPITOL SUITE 1301 • LINCOLN, NE • 68509
BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

Corporations

P.O. BOX 94608
(402) 471-4079

Uniform Commercial Code

P.O. BOX 95104
(402) 471-4080

Notary

P.O. BOX 95104
(402) 471-2558

JOHN A. GALE
Secretary of State

DEBBIE PESTER
Deputy Secretary of State

Revised: August 1, 2006

AUTHENTICATION OF DOCUMENTS
BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE
BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION, NOTARY SECTION

Apostilles and Authentications are official certifications of either a commissioned Nebraska Notary's signature or Nebraska State or County officials signatures on a **document form that may only be issued by the Secretary of State's Office**. An Apostille is a form of official certification used and accepted by countries which are parties to the 1961 Hague Convention to Abolish the Legalization of Foreign Documents. An Authentication is a form of certification used and accepted by all other countries, which are not parties to the 1961 Hague Convention. The United States is a party to this Hague Convention and the Nebraska Secretary of State is the official authority in Nebraska designated to issue Apostilles and Authentications for documents originating in Nebraska.

Important Notes: Nebraska statutes have **no** provision for copy certification performed by individuals, Notary Publics, or employees of the Secretary of State's Office. Reference to "certified copy" below is **an official act performed only by Nebraska State and County Government offices** as these offices may certify official documents issued and of record in their offices.

I. Documents that may be Apostilled or Authenticated by the Secretary of State's Office:

- a) **Birth or Death Certificates:** The original of the certified copy of a Birth or Death certificate (of a birth or death that occurred in Nebraska), issued and certified by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics.

HHS website (Birth Certificate) : <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ced/bicert.htm>.

HHS website (Death Certificate): <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ced/decert.htm>

- b) **Marriage License Certificates:**

(**Preferred**): The original of the certified copy of a Marriage License (of a marriage that occurred in Nebraska), issued and certified by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics. HHS website: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ced/macert.htm>.

**** OR ****

(Acceptable): The original of the certified copy of a Marriage License (of a marriage that occurred in Nebraska), issued and certified by the County Clerk in the county where the Marriage License application was issued.

Note: A **Keepsake Certificate** of the Marriage License issued by many County Clerk's Offices, is **not** an original certified copy. This Keepsake certificate is **not** an official certified record of the Marriage License and is only intended to be kept as a wedding memento.

- c) **Drivers License:** The original of the certified copy of the Drivers License (license issued in Nebraska) and certified by the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles. Persons requesting a certification must send a legible copy of their drivers license to: Department of Motor Vehicles, Drivers & Vehicle Records Division, PO Box 94789, Lincoln, NE 68509, attention: Betty or Deb and they will prepare the official certification of the license record. There is no fee set in statutes for this certification. To save yourself time, include a note with your certification request stating: Upon completion of the certification of the drivers license record, please call the Secretary of State's Office at (402) 471-2558 to make arrangements for picking up the certification. Our office will then prepare an Apostille or Authentication.
- d) **Adoption Agency License certification:** The original of the certified copy of the Adoption Agency License (license issued in Nebraska) and certified by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services System. There is no fee set in statutes for this certification. To save prospective adoptive parents time, requests for this certification may be made directly to the Secretary of State's Office. We will contact HHSS, they will prepare the certification, and we will make arrangements to get the certificate. Our office will then prepare an Apostille or Authentication of this license certification.
- e) **Medical License or Master Social Work certification:** The Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services System is the State Agency which issues licenses for health related professions and occupations and they will prepare an official certification of their license records. There is a \$25.00 fee to receive the certification document from HHSS. Send the request and fee to: Nebraska Health & Human Services Systems, Credentialing Division, State Office Building, 3rd Floor, 301 Centennial Mall South, PO Box 94986, Lincoln, NE 68509. To save yourself time, include a note with your request stating: Upon completion of the certification of the license record, please forward the certification to the Secretary of State's office, Notary section. Our office will then prepare an Apostille or Authentication of this license certification.
- f) **Nebraska Adoption Statutes certification:** The Nebraska Legislature, office of the Revisor of Statutes, is the State Agency authorized to certify Nebraska statutes and they will prepare an official certification of the specific adoption statute

(§43-104.07). There is no fee set in statute for this certification. To save prospective adoptive parents time, requests for this certification may be made directly to the Secretary of State's Office. We will contact the Revisor's Office, they will prepare their certification, and we will make arrangements to get the certificate. Our office will then prepare an Apostille or Authentication of their certification.

- g) **Divorce Decree:** The original of the certified copy of a Divorce Certificate (of a divorce that occurred in Nebraska), issued and certified by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics. HHS website: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ced/dicert.htm>. To save yourself time, include a note with your request stating: Upon completion of the HHSS certification, please forward to the Secretary of State's Office, Notary section.
- h) **Decree of Dissolution of Marriage:** The original of the certified copy of the Decree of Dissolution of Marriage (of a divorce that occurred in Nebraska) issued and certified by a Nebraska Clerk of the District Court's Office.
- i) **Deeds Documents:** The County Register of Deeds offices file deeds records and will prepare an official certified copy of a Deed on file in their respective offices. The fee set is in statutes §33-109 at \$1.50 per page (no separate charge for the actual certification). Send the certified copy of the Deed received from the county to our office and we will then prepare an Apostille or Authentication of their certification.
- j) **Financial Documentation:** The original document, with an original signature of an official or employee of a financial institution, containing a properly executed acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation notarization.
- k) **School Transcript*:** The original document, with an original signature of a school official authorized to sign such a school record, also containing a properly executed acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation and notarization.
- l) **Diploma*:** The original document, with an original signature of a school official Authorized to sign such a school decree, also containing a properly executed acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation and notarization.
- m) **Business documentation:** The original document, with an original signature of an official or employee of the business, containing a properly executed acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation and notarization.
- n) **Power of Attorney or other public documents:** The original document, with an original signature(s), also containing a properly executed acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation and notarization.
- o) **IRS Individual Income Tax Forms:** The prospective adoptive parents must make the photocopy of their Individual Income Tax Forms. The copy must be a legible and clean copy, i.e. do **not** sign, write, or notarize on this photocopy.

Please contact your adoption agency for the official Oath form approved for use in Nebraska. Upon receipt of a properly executed Oath form attached to the

Individual Income Tax Form, our office will then prepare the Authenticate or Apostille.

- p) **Notice of Favorable Determination Concerning Application for Advance Processing of Orphan Petition (Form I-171H):** issued by the US Department of Homeland Security-Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. The prospective adoptive parents must make the photocopy of the Form I-171H. The copy must be a legible and clean copy, i.e. do **not** sign, write, or notarize on this photocopy. Please contact your adoption agency for the official Oath form approved for use in Nebraska. Upon receipt of a properly executed Oath form attached to the Form I-171H, our office will then prepare the Authentication or Apostille.
- q) **Passport Records:** Prospective adoptive parents must take their passport and make the photocopy of the passport themselves. The copy should be a black and white copy, **not** a colored photocopy. The copy of the passport must be a legible and clean copy, i.e. do **not** sign, write, or notarize on this photocopy. Please contact your adoption agency for the official Passport Holder's Oath form approved for use in Nebraska. Upon receipt of a properly executed Passport Holder's Oath form attached to the copy of the passport, our office will then prepare the Authentication or Apostille.
- r) **Fingerprint Cards issued by the FBI:** The U.S. Department of State has recently changed their policy on authenticating Fingerprint Cards. The Department of State has determined that a Fingerprint Card is considered a personal document and may be authenticated by the Secretary of State's Office. (Please contact our office for an Acknowledgement form to be notarized which may then be attached to the Fingerprint Cards.)
- s) **Other government records:** Must be an original or original certified copy from the governmental agency that issued or filed the document.
- t) **Documents containing blank spaces or signature lines:** Prior to notarization, blank spaces or signature lines (other than the signature line for document signer and Notary) should be lined through and initialed by all persons so that nothing may be added to or altered on the document without the knowledge of the signers after the signing/notarization. Documents should **never** be altered after having been executed by the parties involved and notarized by the Notary.

The affiant must personally acknowledge and sign the document in the presence of a Nebraska Notary. The Notary must properly execute the acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation statement, and affix their stamp and signature. Must be an original document, with original signatures.

OR

Must be an original document brought into our office for attestation. Upon presentation of proper government-issued picture identification, a staff Notary will witness the signer affix his signature; execute the acknowledgement, oath, or affirmation; and notarize the document.

***Exception:** Typically learning institutions (high schools; technical, community, public or private colleges) issue only **one** official transcript of grades or diplomas. Our office will then accept a copy if the transcript or diploma is photocopied by student. The copy must be a legible and clean copy, i.e. do **not** sign, write, or notarize on the photocopy. Please contact our office for an acknowledgement form approved for use in Nebraska. Upon receipt of a properly executed acknowledgement form attached to the transcript or diploma, our office will prepare the Authentication or Apostille.

Note: Our office must prepare separate Authentications or Apostilles for each notarized or certified document submitted. We **cannot** Authenticate or Apostille 'bundled' documents (multiple documents that are notarized or certified and attached in a packet).

II. When requesting an Apostille or Authentication, it is imperative to include the following:

- a) Original document (exceptions stated above);
- b) Note advising which country the document is being prepared for
- c) \$10.00 check (US Dollars) in payment of statutory fee for each document requiring an Apostille or Authentication;
- d) Daytime telephone number or email address where you can be reached if we have questions;
- e) Address for return of the Apostille or Authentication. Note: We return documentation via regular US First Class Mail. If you wish your documentation returned via courier, you must provide a pre-paid, pre-addressed airbill.

The Notary Division normally has same day service for processing Apostilles and Authentications, depending upon the volume of mail received. Apostilles and Authentications requests may be brought into the office for processing; however, our office closes at 5:00 p.m. so we request that you bring in your request **prior to 4:00 p.m.** to assure that they may be processed before our office closes for the day.

III. Send or bring your Apostille or Authentication requests to:

Nebraska Secretary of State's Office
Business Services Division, Notary Section
1445 "K" St. State Capitol Bldg, Suite 1301

PO Box 95104
Lincoln, NE 68509